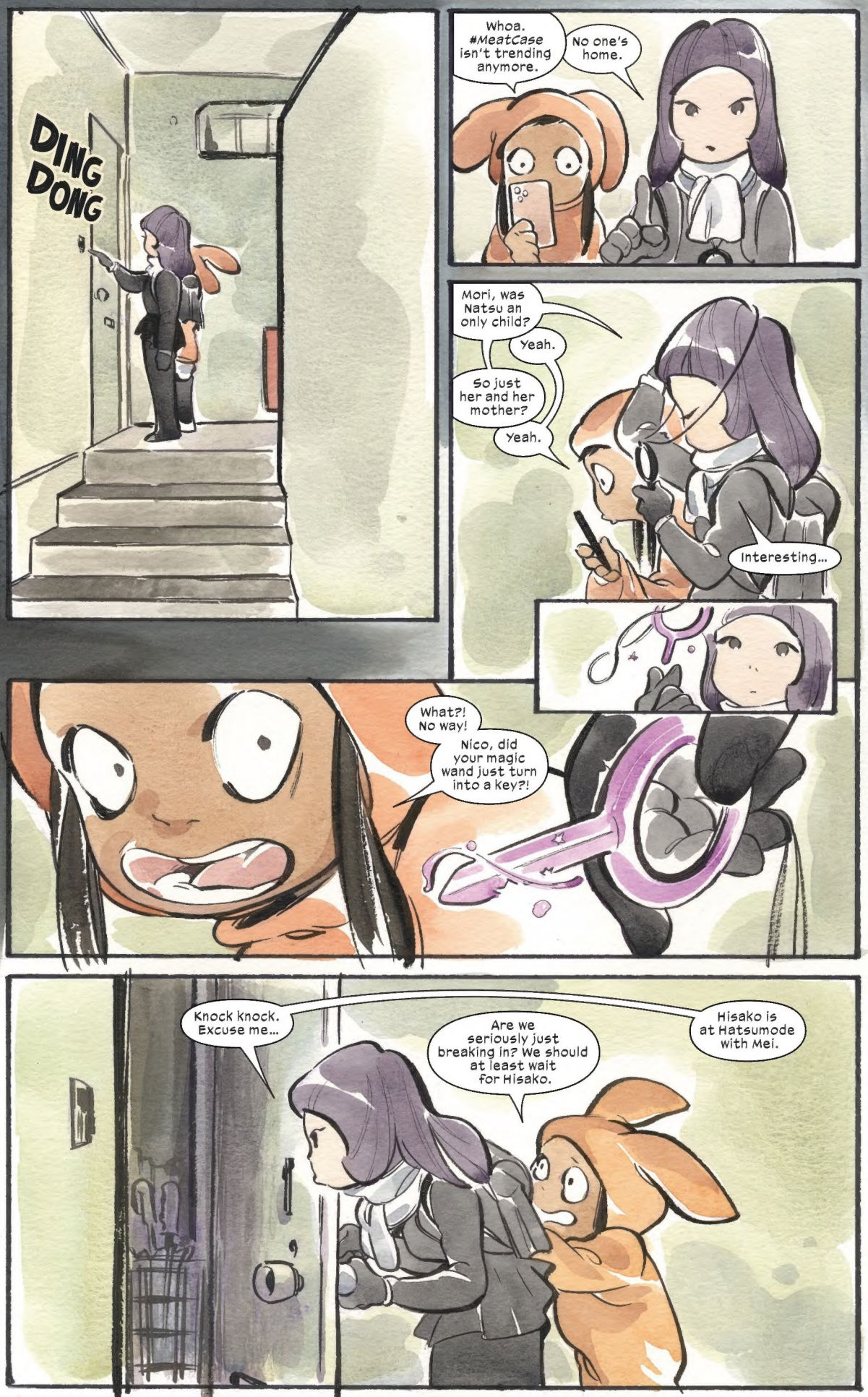
MARVEL

ULTIMATE X-MEN

11

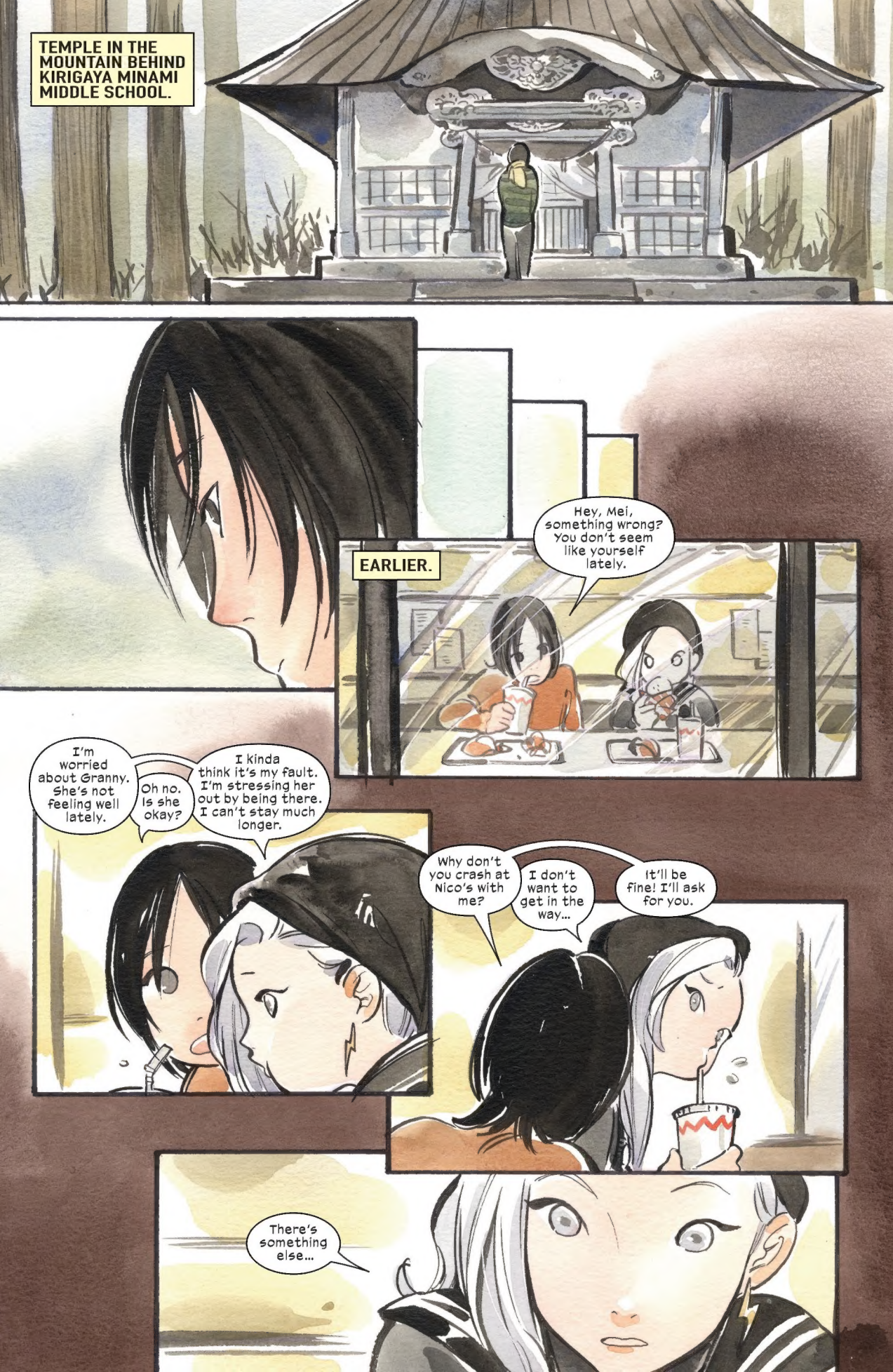
PEACH MOMOKO

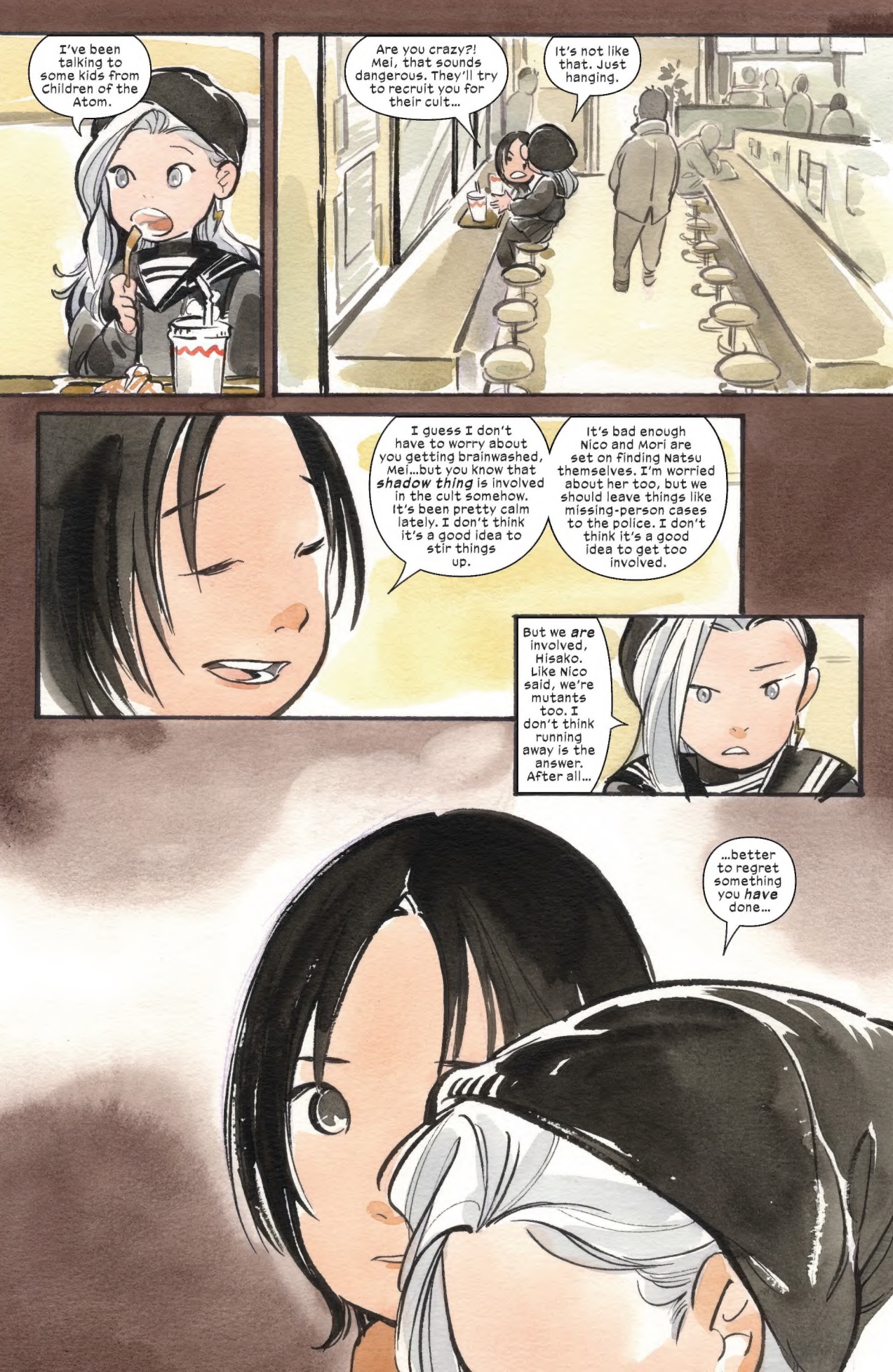
JAN. 2025 | RATED T+


DING DONG
Whoa. #MeatCase isn't trending anymore.
No one's home.
Mori, was Natsu an only child?
Yeah.
So just her and her mother?
Yeah.
Interesting...
What?! No way!
Nico, did your magic wand just turn into a key?!
Knock knock. Excuse me...
Are we seriously just breaking in? We should at least wait for Hisako.
Hisako is at Hatsumode with Mei.

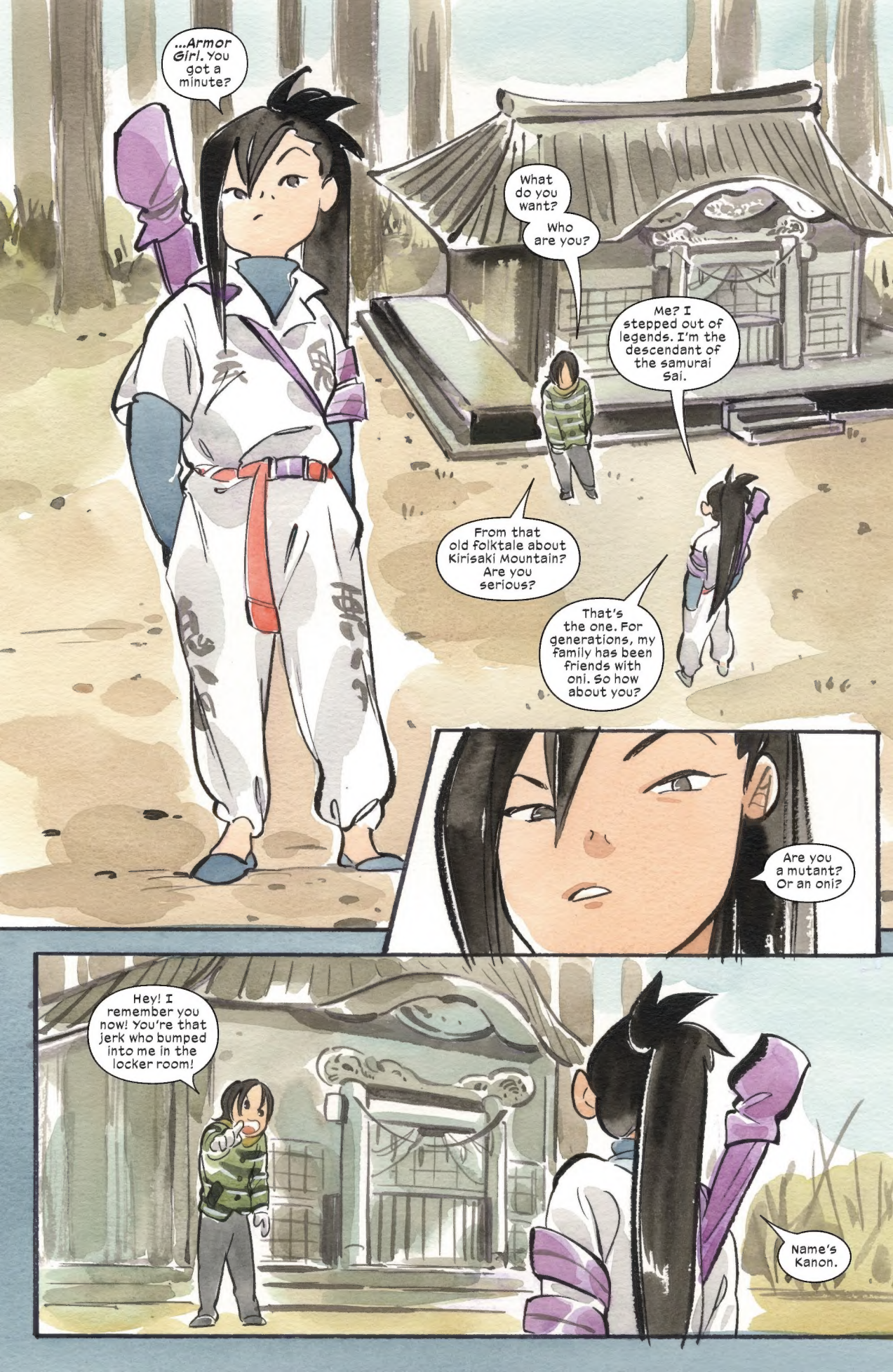
Hello? Is anyone home?
We shouldn't be doing this... Let's go back...
You want to find Natsu, don't you? We need some kind of lead.
Yeah, but...this is trespassing...
Now, where is Natsu's room?
Look at these holes! This must've been Natsu!
This is real bad...

What could have happened...?
Natsu...


TEMPLE IN THE MOUNTAIN BEHIND KIRIGAYA MINAMI MIDDLE SCHOOL.
EARLIER.
Hey, Mei, something wrong? You don't seem like yourself lately.
I'm worried about Granny. She's not feeling well lately.
Oh no. Is she okay?
I kinda think it's my fault. I'm stressing her out by being there. I can't stay much longer.
Why don't you crash at Nico's with me?
I don't want to get in the way...
It'll be fine! I'll ask for you.
There's something else...


I've been talking to some kids from Children of the Atom.
Are you crazy?! Mei, that sounds dangerous. They'll try to recruit you for their cult...
It's not like that. Just hanging.
I guess I don't have to worry about you getting brainwashed, Mei...but you know that ***shadow thing*** is involved in the cult somehow. It's been pretty calm lately. I don't think it's a good idea to stir things up.
It's bad enough Nico and Mori are set on finding Natsu themselves. I'm worried about her too, but we should leave things like missing-person cases to the police. I don't think it's a good idea to get too involved.
But we ***are*** involved, Hisako. Like Nico said, we're mutants too. I don't think running away is the answer. After all...
...better to regret something you ***have*** done...

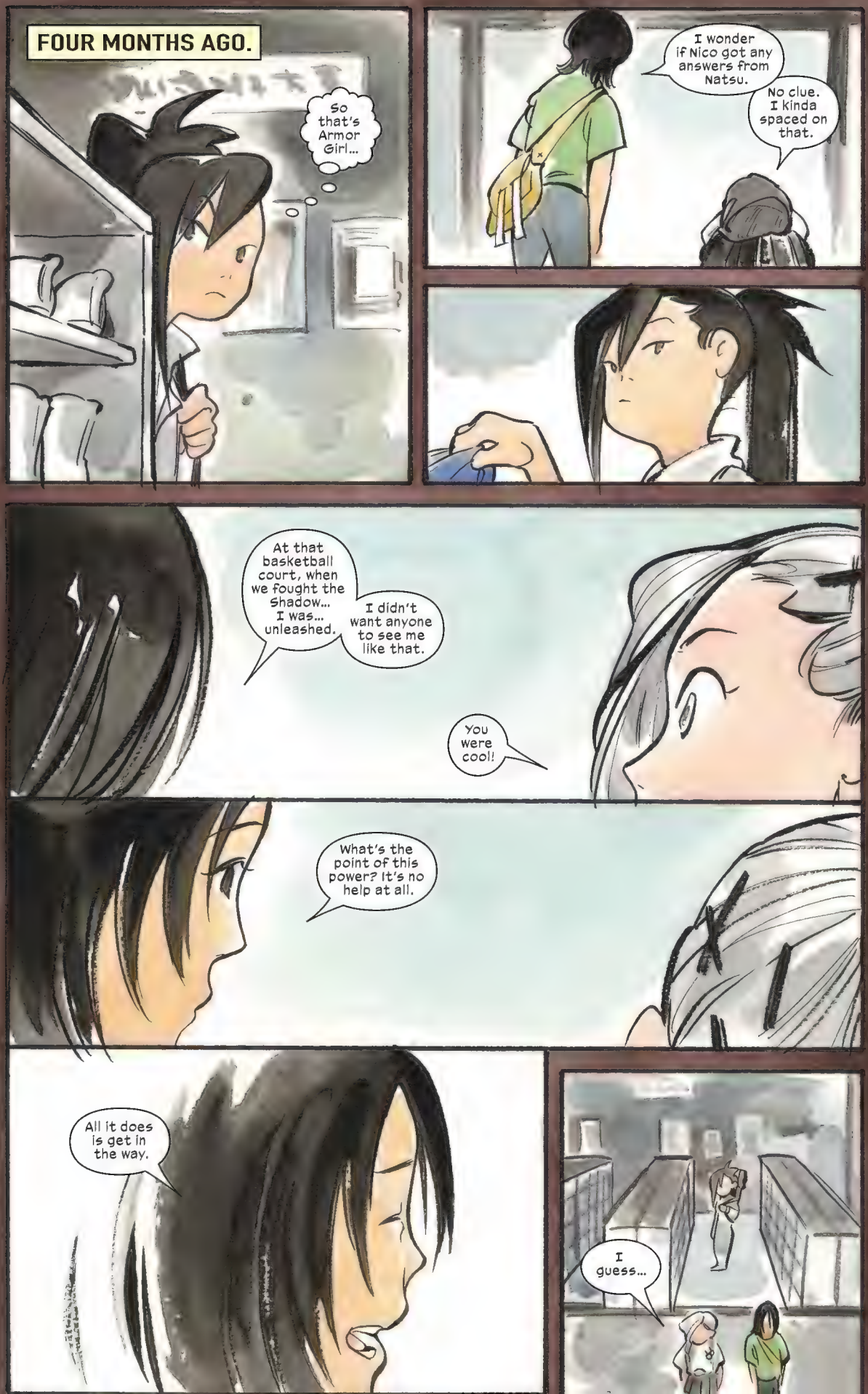
"...than something you *haven't.*"
Mei is so strong. So confident.
Why am I...
...like this...?
!!!
That shadow--?
There you are...


...Armor Girl. You got a minute?
What do you want?
Who are you?
Me? I stepped out of legends. I'm the descendant of the samurai Sai.
From that old folktale about Kirisaki Mountain? Are you serious?
That's the one. For generations, my family has been friends with oni. So how about you?
Are you a mutant? Or an oni?
Hey! I remember you now! You're that jerk who bumped into me in the locker room!
Name's Kanon.

I don't know what your deal is, but I don't have time for games.
Not so fast.
I bumped into you because I smelled something special from you.
Let's see what you got, Armor Girl.
Stop calling me that!!!
There she is.
That's who I wanted to meet.

Your power's mostly defensive, isn't it?
Me, I prefer *offense.*

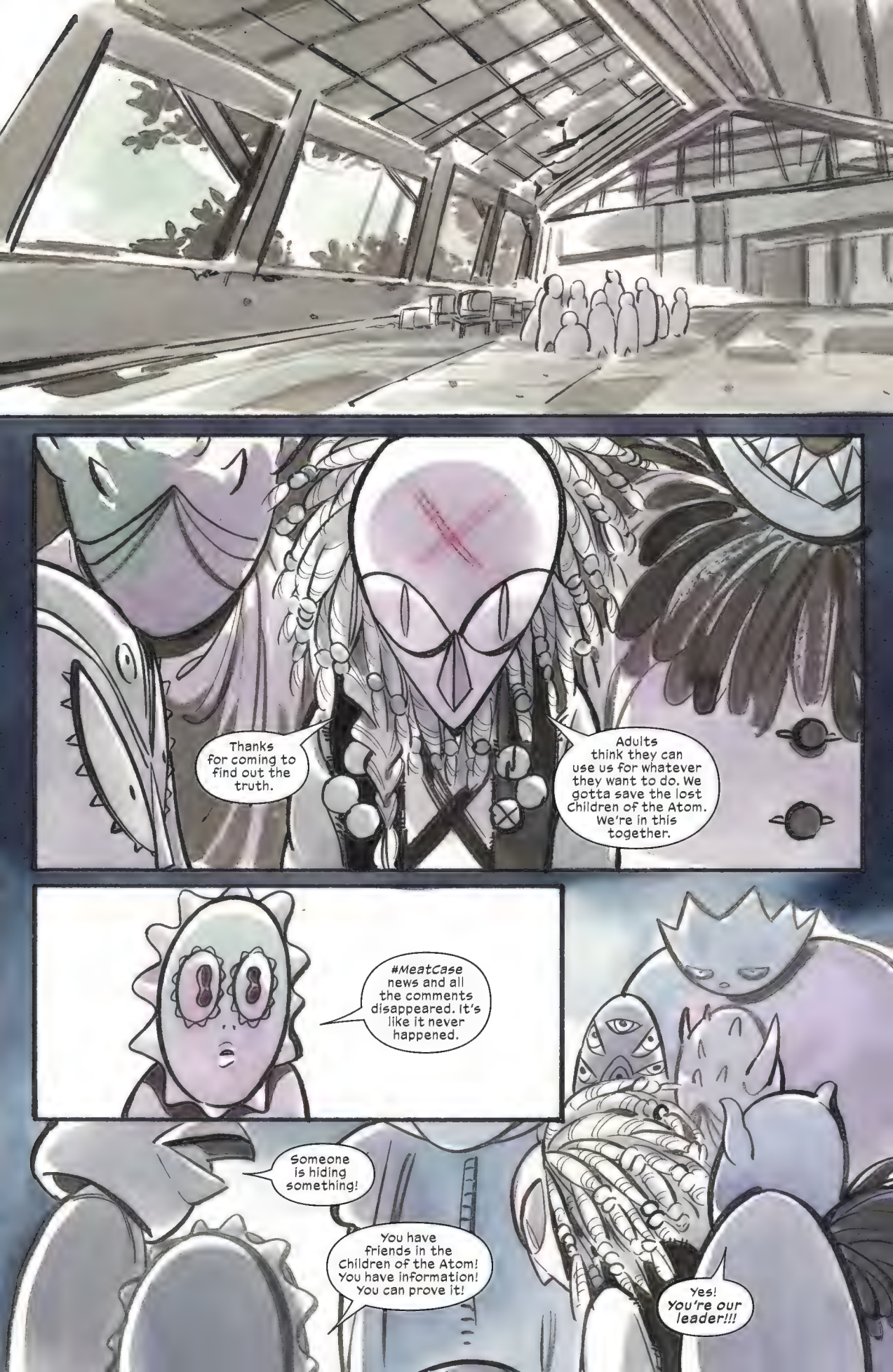
KRRAAAAK
Is that it? I thought you'd bring more.
Why should I? I don't even know who you are.
I don't fight without reason.
You don't fight even if someone *does* give you a reason, from what I've seen.

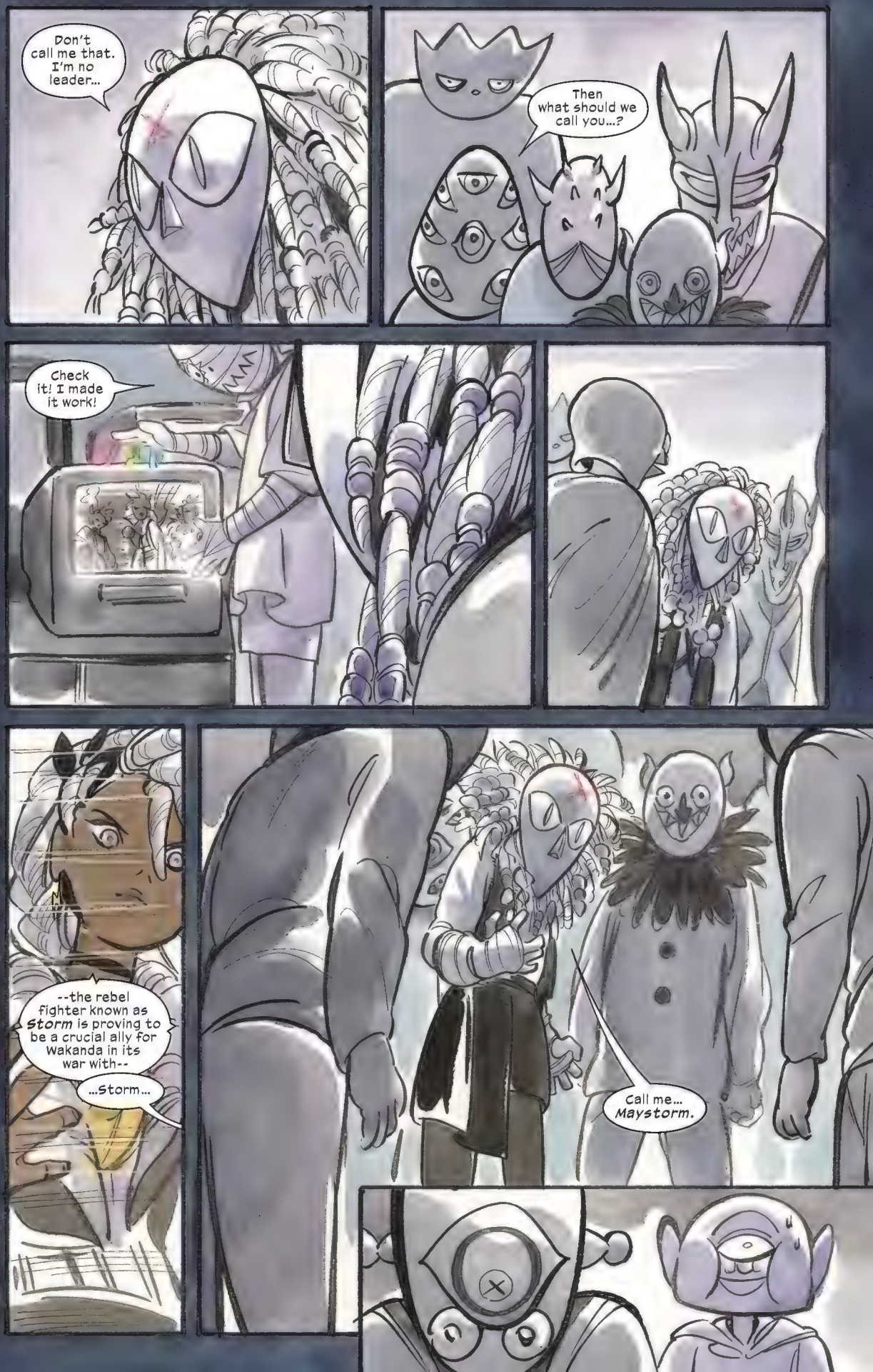

FOUR MONTHS AGO.
So that's Armor Girl...
I wonder if Nico got any answers from Natsu.
No clue. I kinda spaced on that.
At that basketball court, when we fought the Shadow... I was... unleashed.
I didn't want anyone to see me like that.
You were cool!
What's the point of this power? It's no help at all.
All it does is get in the way.
I guess...

Don't pretend you know me.
I'm not some character in whatever story you're making.
You know that #MeatCase? I'm the one who found it.
So what?
Aren't you scared *you* could be in the next suitcase?
Whatever happens, life is just a game. I'll keep playing until the end.

Anything new about #MeatCase?
Zero.
Have you seen this cat meme?
So. Cute.
You see that? What's going on in New York?
No. What happened?
The new Black Cat pulled off a massive heist.
Oh, Shinobu. You're home. You really shouldn't be going out. You're still healing.

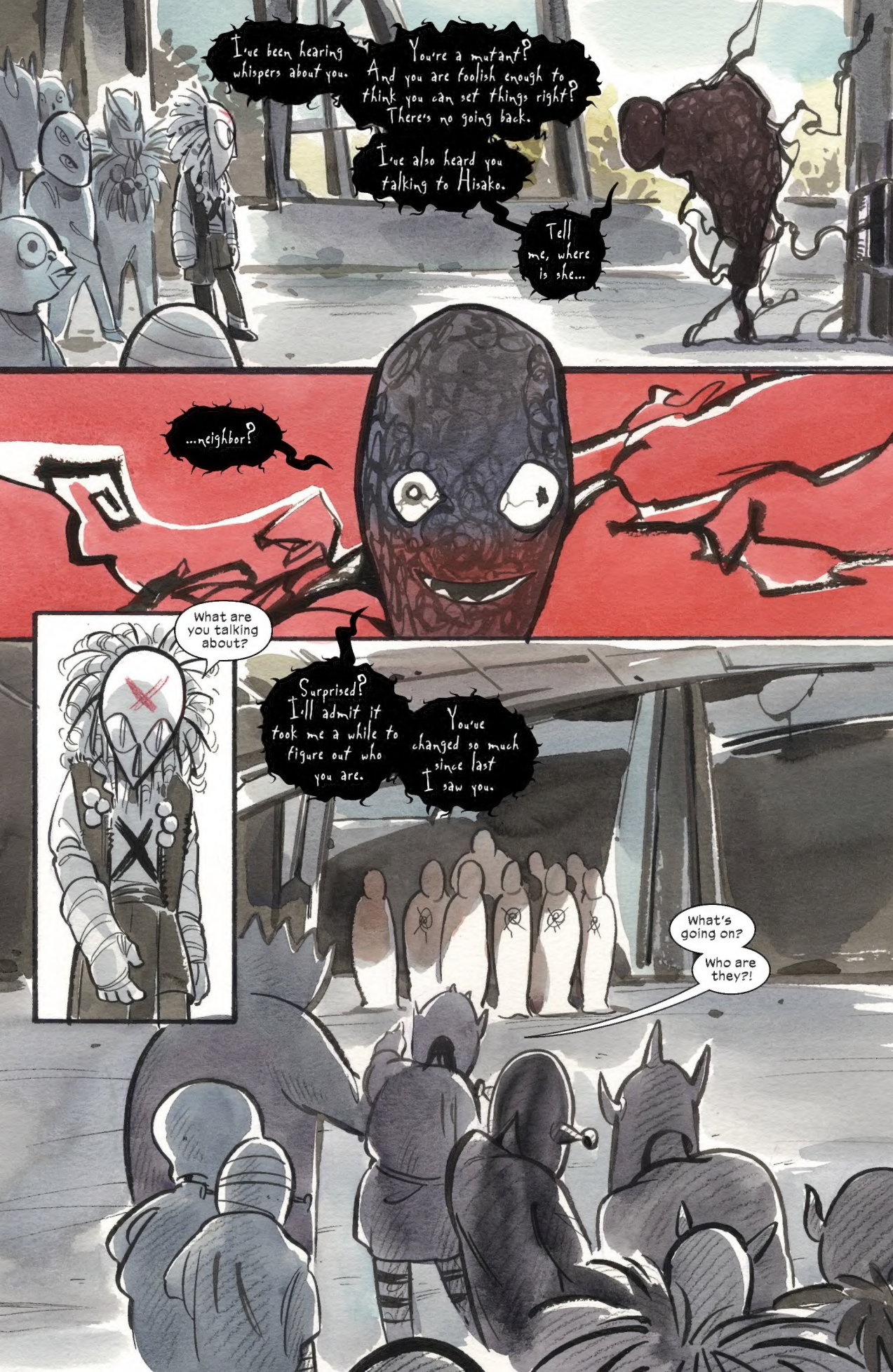
SLAM
Dinner's almost ready. When you're done, wash up and come on down.


Thanks for coming to find out the truth.
Adults think they can use us for whatever they want to do. We gotta save the lost Children of the Atom. We're in this together.
#MeatCase news and all the comments disappeared. It's like it never happened.
Someone is hiding something!
You have friends in the Children of the Atom! You have information! You can prove it!
Yes! You're our leader!!!


Don't call me that. I'm no leader...
Then what should we call you...?
Check it! I made it work!
--the rebel fighter known as Storm is proving to be a crucial ally for Wakanda in its war with--
...Storm...
Call me... Maystorm.

What the hell is that?
!?

What is that?!?
That is something that's been a pain in my ass for months.
Harassing me and my friends...
He's one of the Children of the Atom.
Is he an enemy?
I thought he was. But he's a victim just like us.
What nonsense are you speaking?


I've been hearing whispers about you.
You're a mutant? And you are foolish enough to think you can set things right? There's no going back.
I've also heard you talking to Hisako.
Tell me, where is she...
...neighbor?
What are you talking about?
Surprised? I'll admit it took me a while to figure out who you are.
You've changed so much since last I saw you.
What's going on?
Who are they?!

That symbol...are they Children of the Atom?
Are they mutants like us...?
Maystorm, what do we do? Do we fight, or...?
I'm not here to fight the Children of the Atom.
I want to save them.
I loathe hypocrites like you.
...What the hell is going on...?
つづく
To be continued...

LEXICON

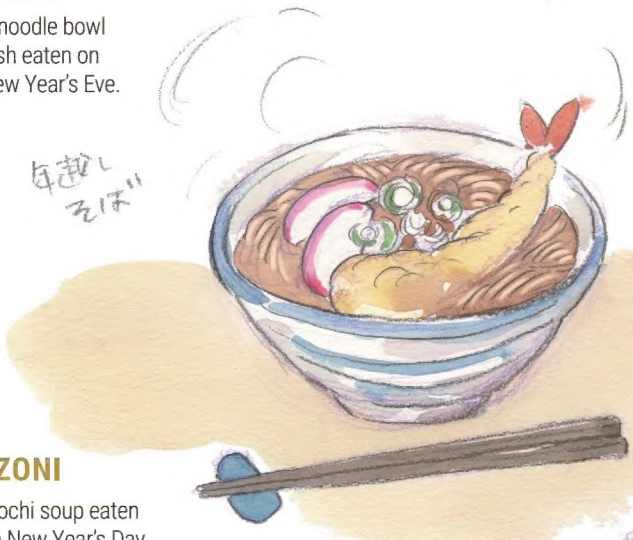
NEW YEAR'S TRADITIONS

KAGAMI MOCHI

Rice cakes with daidai (a type of orange) on top. The mochi is eaten for good luck.

TOSHIKOSHI SOBA

A noodle bowl dish eaten on New Year's Eve.

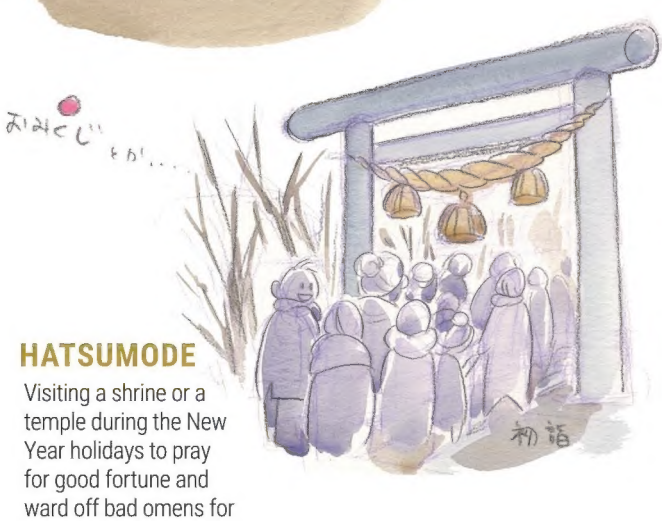


KOTATSU & MANDARIN ORANGES

A kotatsu is a heated table found in Japanese homes. Peeling and eating oranges while sitting under the kotatsu is a common winter tradition.

OZONI

Mochi soup eaten on New Year's Day.



HATSUMODE

Visiting a shrine or a temple during the New Year holidays to pray for good fortune and ward off bad omens for the coming year.